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1962/02/26

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : G - Mr. Johnson

DATE: February 26, 1962

FROM : CMA - Mr. Hurwitsch

SUBJECT: Cuba Project

There is attached the working level draft regarding the use of U.S. military forces in support of the Cuba project. When approved, the paper would, of course, assume the form of a joint memorandum to the President from the Secretaries of State and Defense. Neither Mr. Woodward nor Mr. Goodwin have seen this as yet.

I feel that the significant area of agreement lies in paragraph 3, page 2. The disagreement shown in paragraph 2, page 2 stems from my reluctance to agree to language which is speculative or alarmist. The disagreement shown in paragraph 6, page 8 stems from my belief that reprisals by the Cuban government (even before the revolt began) would not provide politically feasible circumstances for the use of military force. Further, paragraph 8 is inconsistent with the substance of paragraph 3 a. (page 2).

A somewhat more detailed breakdown of paragraph 6, Enemy Capabilities might be useful (we have tried to keep the paper brief).

DOD has been reluctant to provide detail regarding Force Involvement. Paragraph 7 reflects as much as the DOD representative (Col. Seamen) felt at liberty to provide. I understand that military intervention would take place in several areas of Cuba simultaneously, with the preponderance of force focussed in the vicinity of (but not on) Habana.

The DOD representative intimated by telephone today that the JCS was unhappy about the draft - apparently feeling that he had conceded too much to State's position.

ARA: CMA: RA Hurwitsch: efb

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USE OF US MILITARY FORCE, CUBA PROJECT

1. Scope and Purpose

The objective of the Cuban Project is to help the Cubans overthrow the Communist regime from within Cuba and institute a new government with which the United States can live in peace. The US has the maximum to gain in the East-West struggle if the Cuban people can accomplish this task without overt US military assistance. As the project matures and a genuine revolt occurs, the Cuban people may fall short of their objective and require external military assistance. The purpose of this paper is to determine the minimum desirable political-military conditions under which military intervention in Cuba by US forces in support of a revolt by the Cuban people would be feasible from both the international political and military standpoint. A policy decision with respect to the political and military conditions under which US military intervention should be undertaken in this context not only is desirable for contingency planning purposes, but also could serve as an added stimulus to the Cuban people to revolt, if the decision were favorable and were to be discreetly made known.

In addition, the Communist regime's reaction to incipient internal revolt may be such as to justify US military intervention in Cuba under existing international law and our treaty obligations.

2. General

a. The Marxist-Leninist government of Cuba presents a threat to the peace and security of the hemisphere. The US can not tolerate permanently the existence of such a government which provides the Sino-Soviet Bloc with a stepping stone for subversion of other Latin American states.

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, and which may become a military base at close range, increasing our national vulnerability and defense costs as US forces are developed or shifted to meet this threat.

b. Time favors consolidation of the political and military powers of the Communist regime in Cuba. Almost all aspects of the problem of overthrowing the government continue to increase in difficulty and complexity. Sino-Soviet Bloc material, moral, political, military and financial assistance contribute toward strengthening the Communist regime.

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There is a potential threat of Soviet military bases in Cuba equipped with nuclear ballistic missiles.

The Cuba Project, therefore should be developed and executed as rapidly as prudence may permit.

c. Military intervention in Cuba by US forces should be considered when it is clearly apparent to the world that such action is justified by international law, treaty commitments, or on moral grounds as support for a revolt by the Cuban people as contemplated in the Cuba Project. Such situations are described in Appendix hereto.

3. Circumstances of Recognition of the New Cuban Government and Initiation of US Military Intervention

a. Cuba

The Cuba Project has created a chaotic internal situation in Cuba where:

(1) The revolution is open and seriously threatens the Communist regime;

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8. Reprisals by the Communist Cuban government against counter-revolutionary forces which include those Cuban nationals friendly to the United States and who are closely associated with the US inspired resistance movement. This situation would require rapid action by the United States in an effort to preserve the lives of those Cubans who must be available to form the new government. Extermination of a limited group of counter-revolutionaries that are not connected with the over-all US plan would be considered insufficient provocation for US force employment unless requested by the primary group or groups of Cuban insurgents.

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APPENDIX A

CONTINGENCY SITUATIONS UNDER WHICH THE USE OF US MILITARY
FORCE WOULD BE NEEDED

1. The Cuban Project has created a chaotic internal situation in Cuba where:
 - a. The revolution is open and seriously threatens the Communist regime;
 - b. Areas are taken and held by the revolutionaries, and;
 - c. Leadership of the revolt, unable to overthrow the government or sustain the revolution, requests assistance from the United States and/or the Organization of American States.
2. An attack on the Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay. Such attack, however, must be more than simply a threat or demonstration. It should be a serious physical attempt - chemical, biological or force of arms - to oust the United States from the base.
3. An armed attack by Cuba against territory, people, or the land, sea or air forces of the United States or another American republic.
4. A decision by the members of the OAS under Article 8 of the Rio Treaty that armed force should be used, once the UN Charter requirement of UNSC authorization of "enforcement action" has been discharged.
5. Open Soviet military assistance to the Communist Cuban regime at any stage after initiation of the revolt.
6. Significant and/or repeated attack by the Cuban military establishment on commercial shipping or aircraft of the United States or another American republic on or over the high seas.
7. Significant sabotage or attack by the Communist Cuban government, of US military or naval installations.

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be the same in each situation. US military plans, however, provide a degree of selective application of force to primarily military objectives and resistance areas. Basically it is the DOD position that the operation be conducted as rapidly as possible, quickly confronting enemy forces with sufficient strength to be clearly beyond Cuban capability to resist, with the view toward early capitulation of Cuban units and avoidance of needless loss of life.

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- (2) Areas are taken and held by the revolutionaries, and;
- (3) Leadership of the revolt, unable to overthrow the government or sustain the revolution, requests assistance from the United States and/or the Organization of American States (OAS).

b. Latin America

Latin American Governments are in a reasonable position to resist internal pressures aimed at significant anti-US measures domestically and/or in the OAS.

c. Sino-Soviet Bloc

While the threat of general war resulting from US military intervention appears to be remote an assessment of Sino-Soviet Bloc reaction should be undertaken by the USB on a first priority basis.

d. Rest of the World

Remaining friendly governments are in a reasonable position to resist internal pressures aimed at significant anti-US measures domestically and/or in the United Nations.

e. US Congress

US Military forces have sufficient hard intelligence upon which to base the maintenance of a readiness posture providing the capability of adequate US military reaction in response to the situation in Cuba.

4. Political-Military Objectives

- a. We should intervene militarily in Cuba under circumstances and in a manner which would ensure that the overthrow of the Communist Cuban Government and its replacement by a government with which we can live in peace results in increasing the security of the US and does not result in a net Sino-Soviet Bloc gain in the cold war elsewhere in the world. The leadership position of the US in the free world as a consistent

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advocate of peaceful solutions to international problems, the stability of friendly governments in the hemisphere, and the future of the Alliance for Progress program are among the significant factors to be considered in this regard. Additional significant factors to be considered include retention of US bases in the hemisphere; sources of strategic raw materials, and US control of the Panama Canal. Military intervention on the basis of international law or our treaty commitments would of course diminish the political risk.

b. To accomplish our objective with respect to the Cuba project we would make clear to the world that we are responding to an appeal for assistance from a government representative of the people; that we are intervening for the purpose of restoring order and holding free elections; and that we will withdraw as soon as the new government advises that our assistance is no longer required.

c. We would conduct the military operation with sufficient force to overcome the Castro forces as quickly as possible while minimizing indiscriminate destruction, especially in populated areas. To this end DOD would keep close track of the state and location of Cuban forces and would coordinate with CIA in matters pertaining to covert programs in order to provide military assistance as required to hard-pressed elements of the revolt and to avoid inadvertent targeting of friendly forces or installations.

5. Contingencies World Wide

The United States must weigh the effect that the need for ready forces in support of the Cuba project may have on the over-all US force posture to face contingency situations in other parts of the world. Once the revolt begins, Communist Bloc military and para-military diversions could be expected

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anywhere. Embassies and unified and specified commands should be alerted to such possibilities.

6. Enemy Capabilities

a. Cuban ground forces including regular forces, the ready reserve and the homeguard are estimated at 275,000.

b. Significant aircraft of the Cuban Air Force are estimated at 35 MIG-15s and 10 MIG-19s. Personnel strength is unknown.

c. The Cuban Navy is capable of moderately effective patrol operations along selected portions of the Cuban Coast. Combat capabilities are negligible. 4 PT and 3 PC type vessels have been received.

d. In addition to normal combat forces indicated above, extensive military preparations have been undertaken such as the organization of large arms depots, tunneling, fortification of large gun emplacements around Havana, construction of beach defenses and installation of fire control and surveillance radar.

7. Force Involvement

a. The application of US force in Cuba will be accomplished by the execution of prepared contingency plans by employing Army, Navy, and Air Force forces under the Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Command (CINCLANT). In brief, US forces employed will be two Army Airborne Divisions, two Marine Division Wing Teams, tailored supporting forces to improve armor and artillery capabilities, Naval airpower and gunfire support and Air Force tactical air units as required. One additional Army division will be designated as ready reserve in the United States.

b. It is not feasible to define limitations to the application of US force under each separate situation which requires US military intervention since enemy resistance will probably

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